

Message Text

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46

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9978

INFO PANCANAL

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 8284

E .O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PN

SUBJECT: BOMB PLOTS

REF: PANAMA 8182; PANAMA 8199

1. DECEMBER 5 5."DOMINICAL" AND DECEMBER 6 "MATUTINO" CARRIED AN ALLEGED CONFESSION BY JORGE RODRIGUES AIZPURUA, WHO IS ACCUSED OF TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN THE NOVEMBER 29 BOMB EXPLOSION. RODRIGUEZ STATED THAT THREATS AGAINST THE SAFTY OF HIS FAMILY BY MIAMI EXILES FORCED HIM TO MAKE AND DENOTE BOMBS HERE.

2. THE CONVERSATION TOOK UP TWO FULL PAGES IN THESE PAPERS. (WE ARE POUCHING IT TO ARA/PAN, NADEAU.) DECEMBER 6 "CRITICA" CARRIED A BRIEF ARTICLE ON THE CONFESSION AND A MODERATE EDITORIAL CLAIMING THAT THE PLOT WAS DESIGNED BY MIAMI-BASED PANAMANIANIS SEEKING TO DERAIL THE CANAL NEGOTIATIONS.

3. RODRIGUEZ ADMITTED BRINGING BOMB COMPONENTS (PIPEN POWDER, TIMER) INTO PANAMA HIMSELF. HE SAID THEY WERE GIVEN TO HIM IN MIAMI BY AMADO SANJUR AND JAIME AIZPURUA (ON THE BASIS OF PHOTOGRAPHS, HE LATER SAID IT WAS ALVIN WEEDEN GAMBOA, NOT JAIME AIZPURUA, WHO ACCOMPANIED SANJUR. HE ALSO IMPLICATED ROBERTO EISENMAN, GUILLERMO FORD, IVAN ROBLES AND CHINCHORRO CARLES IN THE PLOT. HE SAID THAT FORD AND BOYD CLAIMED THE PERSONAL FRIENDSHIP

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OF A DELAWARE CONGRESSMAN (UNAMED) WHO WAS INTERESTED

IN THE CURRENT SITUATION IN PANAMA. ALSO THAT EISENMAN WAS ACQUAINTED WITH AN INDIVIDUAL WHO "MANAGED GOVERNOR CARTER'S POLITICAL AFFAIRS IN THE MIAMI AREA" AND WAS TRYING TO OBTAIN AN INTERVIEW WITH CARTER TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS AND THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN PANAMA.

4. DECEMBER 6 PAPERS ALSO CARRY A STATEMENT SIGNED BY GENERAL MANAGER AND OTHER EMPLOYEES OF AIR PANAMA, THE COMPANY FOR WHICH RODRIGUES IS A PILOT. IT AMOUNTS TO A CORPORATE HAND-WASHING AND EXPRESSION OF SHOCK.

5. COMMENT: DESPITE THE SPACE WHICH MATUTINO AND DOMINICAL GAVE TO THE CONFESSION, WE HAVE BEEN SURPRISED BY THE MODERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PRESS. THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT--AT THIS POINT, ANYWAY--APPEARS INTENT ON KEEPING THE AFFAIR LOW-KEY, PERHAPS TO AVOID ANY SUGGESTION TO THE INCOMING CARTEER ADMINISTRATION THAT THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN PANAMA IS UNSETTLED. UNTIL WE GET EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY, WE ACCEPT THIS WHOLE AFFAIR FOR WHAT IT APPEARS ON THE SURFACE TO BE--A BADLY BUNGLED EFFORT BY AN AMATEUR TERRORIST TO PLACE SOME NOISE BOMBS AROUND PANAMA CITY. WE HAVE INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO COMMENT ON WHETHER THE PANAMANIAN WHOM RODRIGUEZ IMPLICATES WERE A PART OF A CONSPIRACY. THE BOMBING ADDS VERY SLIGHTLY IF AT ALL TO THE POLITICAL MALAISE HERE, SINCE THE PERPETRATOR(S) COME OUT OF THIS INCIDENT LOOKING PRETTY SILLY.
GONZALEZ

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Message Attributes

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